

## Letter to the families and friends from the Sergeant Major, 47<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital

4 April 2003

Today marks our 28<sup>th</sup> day in Kuwait at Camp Wolf. The 47<sup>th</sup> now consists of over 600 personnel from 15 different units. Several small detachments and liaison representatives have joined the team since we left Fort Lewis. We have become a team of teams and through a lot of hard work erected the largest Combat Support Hospital in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

I want to let all of our friends, colleagues and loved ones know that we are living in one of the safest and most comfortable camps in Kuwait or Iraq. We are definitely in the far rear. Solders coming in from Iraq and the assembly areas marvel at our living conditions. We are making few sacrifices in this war compared to the soldiers on the front lines. We have two dining facilities (one has ice cream at every meal), showers everyday, over 120 portable toilets to choose from and the chance to sleep in an authentic Bedouin tent. Its not home, but it is tolerable. We are still awaiting electricity and air conditioning for our sleep tents (just a few more days). We even have local civilians filling sand bags for us. Yesterday, over 30 senior non-commissioned officers sandbagged around our generators to reduce the noise hazard. Everything we do is a true team effort.

The first two weeks were very demanding physically. Putting up the hospital tents and positioning all of the equipment was quite a chore. Several of us lost considerable weight. Now that the hospital is up and running most of the soldiers are working in an air-conditioned environment. We continue to make daily improvements to our site.

I am most proud of the service and care our 47<sup>th</sup> team has provided to the injured and sick patients who have entered our hospital. We are a key element of the superb medical care offered to all of the coalition forces in the fight against Saddam. Our focus remains on proper care to the patients and continual improvement of the hospital in every manner possible.

As you probably know, we have become a media and General Officer stopover. Our location provides easy access for dignitaries and the media to talk to our soldiers and patients. We are always gracious hosts. I have given hospital tours to dozens of visitors and am always impressed by the professional briefings provided by our soldiers (from Colonel to Private) in their respective duty sections.

Keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we do for you,